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4 AUG 1982

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

FROM: Richard J. Kerr
Acting Deputy Director for Intelligence

SUBJECT: SAFE

REFERENCE: Your memorandum, same subject, 2 August 1982

1. We believe that the priority needs of our analysts for data processing support are well represented by the developmental rationale of the present SAFE plan. This plan addresses what analysts do during the day: They read the incoming materials, do a certain amount of research, write reports, and coordinate their findings before publication.

2. This chronological order is also the order in which data processing can most effectively help the analyst. The SAFE development priorities conform to this pattern. The first priority: An electronic selection and distribution of the cable traffic under control of the individual analyst; the second priority: A private data base system to control his own resources; the third priority: A central, large data base for back-up research; the fourth priority: Text writing, editing and coordination, where the report remains in electronic form throughout its coordination, publishing, and routing into machine searchable files.

3. These priorities are based on the results of a long and continuing dialogue with the analytic community through their participation in surveys, the SAFE Interim System, the Requirements Development Lab, the Pilot Mail Operation (PMO), and as SAFE office and/or branch coordinators.

4. We want to introduce these capabilities as quickly as the problems of training, profile writing, testing, office renovation (where office renovation is required to support new modular furniture) can be solved. But these capabilities represent far-reaching, fundamental changes in the way we do business. We are changing a large, well established system, and must do it in

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Rvw August 1988
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increments. That is how the DI developed PMO, which models SAFE's first priority. PMO was highly successful for 40 analysts, and resulted in extensive SAFE requirements changes. We would have had serious problems if we had tried to introduce it to 400 analysts at once. All data processing systems have initial problems; incremental development and testing is the best way to solve those problems without disrupting our intelligence production. One of the TRW contract's problems was that it ignored this need.

5. It is difficult for us to weigh the value of individual enhancements, because they interact with each other; SAFE will be much more than the sum of its capabilities. Also, we cannot be sure of the value of an enhancement until an analyst uses it to produce intelligence. However, we have attached a summary, for the capabilities which have been tested, of analyst assessments of their value.

6. CSPO's plan reflects our priorities as given above. As these capabilities are delivered, we expect to be able to reevaluate the requirements, make corrections based on experience, and give meaningful guidance to the system developers. 25X1

Richard J. Kerr

Attachment:
as stated

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Attachment

The SAFE Interim System has been a continuing test bed that has allowed many hundreds of analysts to come in contact with the SAFE basic concepts. The attached FACT SHEET categorizes the basic capabilities and the benefits that analysts claim for the system. The second attachment shows additional comments of analysts.

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CIA Analysts' Comments on the Project SAFE Interim System

"It is a precise and powerful tool. Without the retrieval capabilities of the Interim System, our responsiveness to research tasks which are laid upon the branch would diminish ... and could not be performed without an increase in the clerical and analytical resources."

"It is a valuable tool for doing analytical research. The improved [computer] filing, rapid access to information, and ease with which information can be retrieved have made it possible to attack projects which have previously been neglected as too time-consuming."

"As our ability to automate our data increases, so will the timeliness and quality of our analysis."

"Intelligence problems are far more complex than they were even six years ago, and we must have a more efficient way of handling data to solve them. The Interim System is a step in that direction."

"CIA isn't about to get additional slots from Congress, so the only alternative is to increase analyst efficiency. Use of the Interim System saves me several hours a week."

"Information-gathering for one project which used to take me four hours a day now only takes a half hour using the Text Files and the OCR central index."

"We found information and sources we never knew existed."

"We didn't know what we weren't getting until we could tap into complete Agency receipts via the Text Files."

" ... avoids the delay normally experienced through the in-box route, the holdup in someone's mail backlog, or, even worse, the possibility that a document may never emerge from a possessive analyst's files."

" ... totally dependent on Text Files, would have cost three times as much to research this NIE otherwise."

"ESL estimated that output from our Text File searches has yielded a 10-15% savings on a multi-million dollar contract."

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"Had I not had our branch [computer] file ... I would not have been able to prepare a credible briefing in the time allocated."

"I am wedded to private [computer] files as an instrument for managing voluminous amounts of information. Their flexibility in file structure and capability to cross-reference information are undeniable."

"Our [branch] file allows any analyst to retrieve documents in literally dozens of different ways."

"The opportunity for an analyst to structure a [computer] file and apply keywords of his own choice to ease retrieval is a milestone."

"With our branch [computer] file, we've been able to identify new and unusual patterns of Societ ... which would have been impossible to discern using manual files."

" ... use of the Interim System is an exciting and inspiring account of Interim System utilization to enhance the recognition and synthesis of an intelligence problem and achieving an intelligence breakthrough."

"Flexibility of the system is ideal, since it allows any number of analysts access to one central file and reduces the need for physical [document] storage."

"To support [redacted] for which so much has been spent, there must be a faster way to retrieve and manipulate collateral information than is now possible using hard copy documents." STAT

"The Text Files made possible a search for all reporting from a collection source within fifteen minutes late in the day. Without the Text Files, this review could not have been made by the assigned deadline."

Paraphrase: With computer-stored queries that can be run daily by anyone in the branch, document selection for our contractor ceases to be hard copy and person-dependent.

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